Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please amend claim 1 so that the current status of all claims is as follows:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for reading a micro-discrete indicia on a gemstone, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

locating ~~said~~ a user-created unique micro-discrete indicia on said gemstone; and

reading said <u>user-created unique</u> micro-discrete indicia using near-field optics.

2. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein said micro-discrete indicia is initially located using an eye-loop or a microscope.

3. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein said micro-discrete indicia is located by using predetermined coordinates associated with the indicia on said gemstone.

4. (original) A method according to claim 3 where a document is provided that designates the appropriate coordinates of the micro-discrete indicia of said gemstone.

5. (previously presented) A method according to claim 4 wherein characteristics of said gemstone used to locate said indicia is selected from one of the following:

size, type of gemstone, facet, manufacturer, retailer, and owner.

6. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said micro-discrete indicia is used for authenticating an occasion of said gemstone.

7.   (previously presented) A method according to claim 6 wherein said authentication identifies at least one of the manufacturer, owner, retailer, quality, and type of gemstone.

8.   (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said locating of said indicia on said gemstone is provided by scanning said gemstone.